

HEADLICE POLICY

Change History

Version	Issued	Key Changes	Review
2.0	Updated February 2018	Alignment with current practices	May 2021

1. Rationale

Head lice are small, wingless, blood sucking insects. Their colour varies from whitish-brown to reddish-brown. Head lice only survive on humans and if isolated from the head they die within 24 hours. People get head lice from direct hair to hair contact with another person who has head lice.

The responsibility for managing head lice is shared between parents/guardians, schools and Principals. Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of head lice however the school may conduct head lice inspections throughout the year with prior written-consent. Students with live head lice must be excluded until the day after treatment has commenced.

2. Policy statement

Yarra Primary School will:

- minimise outbreaks of head lice by informing parents and carers upon detection;
- ensure Yarra Primary School complies with DET policy and requirements of the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001.

3. Implementation

- A template consent form that obtains parent/guardian consent to head lice inspections will be provided to parent/guardians for completion as part of enrolment
- The consent form will be updated when guardianship or custody arrangements change for the student or parents/guardians no longer wish to consent to inspections.

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- It will apply for the duration of the child's enrolment at the school.
- Head lice checks without physical contact do not require parental consent.
- Students identified with live head lice will be provided with a note to take home to inform the parent/guardian that their child may have head lice at the conclusion of the school day.
- Such students will be excluded from school until the day after treatment has commenced as set out in the Health (infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001, School Exclusion Table.
- Through school Newsletters or other communications, parents/guardians will be encouraged regularly and preferably once a week, to check for lice or eggs in the hair of all household members and notify the school if their child is affected, when treatment commenced.
- They must not send their children to school with untreated head lice.
- The school will alert parents/guardians of an infestation, particularly the parents of other students in the same class as the affected child/children but will use discretion about informing the school community about an infestation.
- The school will exercise sensitivity towards students and families with head lice, maintain student confidentiality to avoid stigmatization and support and provide practical treatment advice to parents/guardians.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle or if guidelines change

5. Definitions

Head louse (Head lice) is an obligate ectoparasite of humans that causes pediculosis capitis. Head lice are wingless insects spending their entire life on the human scalp and feeding exclusively on human blood.

6. Further Information and Resources

Related Policies

- First Aid Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Excursions and Camping Policy

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DET Resources

- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009
- Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001
- Headlice Parental Consent Form (See Appendix 1)

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APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM TO CONDUCT HEAD LICE INSPECTIONS

Permission to cover the duration of the student's schooling at:

Yarra Primary School

Throughout your child's schooling, the school will be arranging head lice inspections of students.

The management of head lice infection works best when all children are involved in our screening program.

The school is aware that this can be a sensitive issue and is committed to maintaining student confidentiality and avoiding stigmatisation.

The inspections of students will be conducted by a trained person approved by the principal and school council.

Before any inspections are conducted the person conducting the inspections will explain to all students what is being done and why and it will be emphasised to students that the presence of head lice in their hair does not mean that their hair is less clean or well kept than anyone else's. It will also be pointed out that head lice can be itchy and annoying and if you know you have got them, you can do something about it.

The person conducting the inspections will check through each student's hair to see if any lice or eggs are present.

Person's authorised by the school principal may also visually check your child's hair for the presence of head lice, when it is suspected that head lice may be present. They do not physically touch the child's head during a visual check.

In cases where head lice are found, the person inspecting the student will inform the student's teacher and the principal. The school will make appropriate contact with the parents/guardians/carers.

Please note that health regulations requires that where a child has head lice, that child should not return to school until appropriate treatment has commenced. The school may request the completion of an 'action taken form', which requires parents/guardians/carers to nominate if and when the treatment has started.

Parent's/guardian's/carer's full name:

Parent's/guardian's/carer's full name:

Address:..... Post code:.....

Name of child attending the school:.....

I hereby give my consent for the above named child to participate in the school's head lice inspection program for the duration of their schooling at this school.

Signature of parent/guardian/carer: **Date**.....

Signature of parent/guardian/carer: **Date**.....

Please inform the school if guardianship/custody changes for your child, as this form will need to be re-signed to reflect these changes. Please also inform the school in writing if you no longer wish to provide consent for the school to undertake head lice inspections for your child.